



STATE OF ALABAMA  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



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**ALABAMA WORKS WITH NATIONAL CENTERS TO IMPROVE  
OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES**

**Montgomery, Ala.** – The *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA) requires that the U.S. Secretary of Education make an annual determination as to whether each state meets the requirements of the statute based on the data submitted in the Annual Performance Report (APR) and other available information.

The U.S. Department of Education (U.S. DOE), Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) makes annual determinations in implementing Part B of the IDEA according to the following categories: “Meets Requirements, Needs Assistance, Needs Intervention, or Needs Substantial Intervention.” This status determination is based on the totality of the state’s data and information, revised State Performance Plan, state-reported data, and other publicly available information to include the National Assessment on Educational Progress (NAEP) reading and math assessments and the number of students with disabilities who exited an educational program with a regular high school diploma.

Each APR submission is based on the most current available data, which include lag year data (i.e., data from the previous school year). According to the 2021 state determination, based on the FFY 2019 APR submission, the U. S. DOE, OSEP, has determined that under the IDEA, Section 616(d)(2)(A)(i) the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) needs assistance in meeting the requirements of Part B of the IDEA.

Part of the actions a state must take is to report on the technical assistance received and the actions the state took as a result of the technical assistance.

The ALSDE is working to improve outcomes for students with disabilities by receiving technical assistance from several national centers. The ALSDE is partnering with the Region Seven Comprehensive Center (R7CC) to expand and strengthen the state and regional literacy coaching cadre; to promote and scale up effective mathematics practices, policies, and procedures; and to improve the academic achievement of English learners (EL), which include children with disabilities.

Through the “Grades PK-3 Literacy Project,” Alabama will improve student proficiency by building the capacity of educators statewide to deliver instruction grounded in evidence-based literacy practices. As a result of the “Improving Student Excellence in Math Project,” the ALSDE will increase knowledge of effective math practices, implement an effective math coaching model with local education agencies (LEAs), and increase the number of Grades K-5 students proficient in math. Another part of Alabama’s work with R7CC is the “Improving EL Academic Achievement Project” that has yielded increased guidance, support, and technical assistance to help educators effectively plan for the education of multilingual learners.

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*ALABAMA WORKS WITH NATIONAL CENTERS*

Additionally, the ALSDE, Special Education Services (SES) Section, has been working with the National Center for Systemic Improvement (NCSI) to design a new system of general supervision, shifting the focus of LEA monitoring to create a balance between compliance and results for children with disabilities. The ALSDE, SES, will conduct integrated monitoring based on a cyclical schedule and starting this school year, provide differentiated support to LEAs based on low, medium, and high risk. The LEA risk is identified through results indicator data and the differentiated levels of support are universal, targeted, and intensive.

Another national center the ALSDE, SES has been working with is the IDEA Data Center (IDC) to document Alabama's process for collecting, validating, analyzing, and submitting data. The ALSDE, SES will use the IDC Data Process Toolkit to create protocols for all data collections, establishing a well-managed process for data collection, analysis, and reporting.

This will help Alabama implement consistent practices that produce valid and reliable data, build the capacity of data stewards, and support a culture of high-quality data. The technical assistance the ALSDE is receiving from these outstanding national centers, and many of the actions taken as a result, are geared toward improving results and outcomes for children with disabilities in Alabama.

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